

## GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	Pregnancy Choices
Location/Address	15010 Glazier Ave., #104, Apple Valley, MN 55124
Date and Location of Site Visit	June 6, 2016
Grantee Participants	Becky Hanel, Kristin Wermus
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman, Grant Manager
Grant Agreement #/PO #	

**PURPOSE:**

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

**OVERVIEW**

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current?

[Yes](#)

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2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment?

**Yes**

3. Where is this central file located?

**Director's Office**

4. Who is responsible for this central file?

**Executive Director**

5. Does the central file include: **Yes to all**

- The grant proposal?
- The award letter?
- The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments?
- Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes?
- The work plan?
- Any/all payment requests (invoices)?
- Any/all signed subcontracts? Not applicable (no subcontracts)
- Any/all Progress Reports?

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment?

**Yes**

2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately?

**Yes**

3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner?

**Yes**

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### **CONTRACTUAL**

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors?  
**Yes – Mom's group leader and evaluation contractors**
  
2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate?  
**Yes**
  
3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation?  
**Yes**

### **PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE**

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time?  
**Yes**
  
2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant?  
**Yes**
  
3. Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding: **Yes to all**
  - Payroll?
  - Travel?
  - Overtime?
  - Timesheets?
  - Taxes?
  - Purchasing?
  - Compensated time off?

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4. Are employees time sheets approved? **Yes**

By whom (what position)? **Client Services Director (CSD) for all Life Coaching staff**

By the Executive Director? **Yes for admin and CSD**

5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee?

**Yes**

6. Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed?

**Board Treasurer and ED**

Additional Comments:

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### PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

#### *Program History*

- When was your program started? Why was it started? **We began the Baby and Me! program in 2009-We saw a need to provide further services and education for our moms once they found out they were pregnant.**
- What need does your program fulfill? **We are a resource center (from diapers to education) that provides a much-needed community of support and connection. We are a catalyst for relationships for our moms and their babies, in addition to a source of support. We provide individual direct help, and make connections to other resources that can support and meet the unique needs of our clients. We provide a place where moms know they are valued and supported, and that they are not alone.**
- How has the program grown or changed since its beginning? **Initially, Baby and Me! was a video education program, supplemented by conversation. Since 2013 we have moved into a life coaching model that has expanded our reach, deepened our relationships, and created a new community of service and connection. We continue to address practical needs in this model, as well as offering more life coaching and education after the baby is born through our Baby and Me! 2 program.**

#### *Grantee's Target population*

- Who does the organization primarily serve?  
**Women and their children in the South Metro area, often living in poverty.**
- What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage?  
**Our women are primarily ages 17-35, with about 30% Hispanic, 20% African/African American, 40% Caucasian**
- Review recent Demographic reporting.

#### *Leadership and Governance*

- Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they?  
**8 members, see attached contact info.**
- How often do they meet? How are they *informed* of organization's progress and challenges?  
**monthly meetings, monthly Director's reports**
- How supportive is the Board of the program?  
**very supportive**

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- How is the program staffed? **5 part-time Life Coaches, receptionist**
- Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff?  
**Client Services Director and Executive Director**
  - How are staff evaluated on their performance? How long have PA staff been employed there?  
**yearly reviews, PA staff since 2012**
  - How are staff background checks done?  
**Upon employment, a consent for background check form is completed by the employee and the background check is run through the Christian Background Checks Agency**
  - What is your organization's policy on complaints for staff and clients?

### **Staff: (As stated in the Pregnancy Choices Personnel Manual)**

If an employee has a problem, they should report it to their immediate supervisor as soon as possible. If the employee is the Executive Director, or if the employee does not feel comfortable reporting the problem to their immediate supervisor; they should report the problem to the Board of Directors as soon as possible, within five days from the time the problem first occurred. The Executive Director or Board of Directors will decide how to move forward as quickly as possible. The Board of Directors will make the final decision of action to be taken, with time being of the essence.

### **Clients: (Clients are informed of this option on the client intake form)**

If a client has a complaint with the service they are receiving or the staff member that is providing this service they are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Client Services Director, or the Executive Director, depending on the unique situation. A written complaint will be taken (Pregnancy Choices Client Complaint Form) and the issue will be addressed with the staff member and/or service involved. A resolution will be sought as quickly as possible, and within five days of written complaint being made.

### **Budget**

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities? **yes**
- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope? **yes**
- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing? **no**
- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place? **no**
- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed.

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### ***Review Work Plan including:***

#### **Partners**

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program?  
**word of mouth, friends, social services, medical staff**  
Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources?  
**Transportation is sometimes an issue, and occasionally there is a language barrier.**  
What is your most common referral source?  
**internet search, friends, word of mouth**
- Challenges with partners or specific counties?  
**Our main challenge is education, awareness and visibility within the county and community partners. We have an opportunity this month to speak to the Dakota County Resource Fair and increase our visibility and awareness within these agencies, but this is a constant goal for us.**

#### **Work Plan**

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
- **Prepare a short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.**  
How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing?  
**We provide everything that is in our work plan. What we have noticed over the past year is that fewer clients rely on us for employment assistance. Most are already working or are referred to the local workforce center by their county worker so they really don't have a need to use our iPad or computer. We post information on job fairs and specific job postings on our bulletin board located in reception.**  
Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed?  
**We have not removed any services. We have grown and expanded our Good Father program to include a small group which meets for 6 weeks on Tuesday mornings. We will run this program continually throughout the year in addition to the 8-week individual Fatherhood Program.**  
Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016?

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We know that our clientele and client visits have increased but because we had to count all our clients as brand new clients in the June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 report it would look otherwise. So, if we look at Q2 versus Q3, we had fewer visits in the parenting education section for Q3 (257 vs 239) but are close with pregnancy testing and other services so it remains fairly flat.

Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?

We have had a decrease in men joining the 8-week program from when we first launched it (Summer 2016). Some of that is a lack of getting the word out and some is due to the limited schedule of our one male life coach and trying to coordinate with our fathers (many of whom work). We are dedicated to continually reach out to the local community and spread the word about all our programs.

- Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons?

We did make some changes to our work plan to better reflect where we are increasing in our numbers. We increased our work plan count for the car seat program, case management services, education referrals, financial assistance and provide necessary services to all clients. We did drop our client numbers for housing and employment assistance due to reasons discussed above.

### Participants:

- What type of outreach does the organization put into action?  
**online campaign, general media (bathroom ads, high school sports posters), social media campaign (Instagram, Facebook), bulletin advertising, community speaking engagements, hosting chamber events**
- What is working well?

**Word of mouth recommendations from other clients seem to be a real strength. Our clients engage in meaningful relationships when they are here, and that leads them to spread the word on who we are and what we do. We have recently had some community speaking events that are giving us a platform to educate and share our work, knowing that these populations have a broad reach into our community and can share our information.**

What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients?

**The main challenge in finding clients is trying to attract the abortion vulnerable and determined by utilizing targeted marketing (mostly online). We have engaged the services**

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of several marketing vendors and feel we have finally found a company that is reasonably priced, and passionate about our work. Client retention is generally not an issue for us. Once clients enter the program it is rare that they leave. Recently we have had some transportation issues for clients that are coming to us from an outlying distance, and we are trying to address these by providing metro transit cards on an as needed basis. We have also had some clients that have had a difficult time scheduling their first appointments due to their work schedules. We are meeting this need by remaining open one night a week.

### Data:

- How is program data collected and by whom? Is data collected useful to agency?  
**Data collection is done by five life coaches who administer the Baby and Me! program. It is collected for males and females and in English as well as in Spanish. The data is very useful for us to evaluate what is working and not working in our coaching program. We can pinpoint the what is helping our clients reduce stress and hopefully have a full-term baby. We are also measuring how self-efficacy is increased during the coaching process. This year we had a small control group at another center who only watched videos and we were also able to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> location (Little Canada) who does life-coaching participate in the evaluation so we will have much more data than last year!**
- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection? **No, it's going well.**

### Review Evaluation

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. Do you have any questions on your evaluation? We do not have any questions and would like to continue this evaluation as is. Once we have feedback from the researchers we may change or tweak a few questions as needed.

### Miscellaneous

- Anything else you would like to share?  
**We have a very innovative and successful approach in our Baby and Me! program. We are intentionally focusing on how to refine and develop this current program to maximize its fullest potential, and meet the needs of our moms and children even better. One important aspect of this current focus is consistent follow up with the clients that we see. As part of this effort, we are refining our best practices to reflect a**

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more structured plan to follow up. We see that these opportunities to reconnect with clients after an initial visit can result in deeper relationships of support and education to better equip our families for positive life change. Another area of focus is to create better awareness and marketing for new clients. To this end, we have set a time for Board and Staff to develop strategic planning that will help us to develop a concrete action plan for marketing.

- Anything else we haven't asked?

### ***What can we do to help?***

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? Any topic suggestions?  
**I found the meeting to be very helpful, but would've liked to have covered more than one topic (perhaps one in the morning and one in the afternoon). It was difficult to stay attuned to the same topic the entire day.**
- Feedback or suggestions for the state?  
**I appreciate the quick response and support I always receive.**
- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program? **Not at this time.**

### ***Summary:***

Pregnancy Choices (PC) is a nonprofit 501 3 (c) serving women in need in Dakota County and the surrounding metro area since 2009. They are located in Apple Valley. PC has been a Positive Alternative (PA) grantee since the 2012 grant cycle. They are a resource center that provides a much needed community of connection and support for women and children in need. Since 2013 PC has developed a comprehensive life coaching model that has expanded their reach while providing the opportunity to deepen their care and mentoring for their clients. This addition to programming has created a new community effort towards service and connection with women in need. They also have recently added a successful life coaching program for the dads of their clients.

Through their PA funding PC offers comprehensive programming options to assist women in need including: a car seat education program, case management, education assistance, employment assistance, financial assistance, housing assistance, nutrition support, parenting education, pregnancy education and pregnancy testing. Their core belief is the honoring of the dignity of each individual and their staff welcomes anyone who needs pregnancy services. It is through their life coaching relationships that the staff are able to identify positive health choices and offer practical help for their clients.

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Recent minor changes have been made to the PC work plan. We discussed the changes and looked at two areas that may be a concern for reporting on the Quarterly Reporting form – Case Management and Providing Necessary Services. Further revision of the work plan will be needed. After discussion I am confident that PC staff will make the appropriate changes needed to collect and report all data each quarter for both of these services.

Outreach has been a challenge for PC staff especially being a relatively new organization. Getting the word out about their services and making key community connections continues to be a priority for PC staff. Staff would like to continue to grow their circle of influence within their community.

Board recruitment is also a work in progress. PC has a good working board that supports the work and mission of the organization enthusiastically. A few additional board members could help greatly with the task of community outreach.

Follow up for clients is also an area that PC staff would like to work in developing a more structured plan. Connecting with clients after an initial visit is a goal for all staff. Creating an organized protocol for consistent mentorship is the priority.

Outreach efforts for the fatherhood mentoring program have been initiated. Client recruitment has slowed down slightly since the program's robust start. It is the goal for the program to continue to provide individual mentorship and life coaching opportunities for fathers. PC would also like to provide group mentorship opportunities for education and fellowship for men.

PC recently has had a change in leadership. A new Executive Director has been hired and has adapted well to the administration and management of the PA grant. PC has continued to responsibly and enthusiastically administer their PA grant funds for programs that will profoundly impact their clients and southern metro communities. I look forward to our continuing work with Pregnancy Choices as a PA grantee.

**Date: June 8, 2016**

**Grant Manager: Mary Ottman**